

Celebration of, “International Day of the Seafarer Global Dialogue 2026” at Gujarat Maritime University

The **Centre for Maritime Economy** and the **Centre for Maritime Labour Law** at **Gujarat Maritime University (GMU)** successfully commemorated the **International Day of the Seafarer 2026** through a thought-provoking Global Dialogue on the theme:

"Carrying World Trade. Carrying the Risk."

The event brought together eminent maritime professionals whose practical insights enriched discussions on the realities, responsibilities, safety, welfare, and resilience of seafarers who continue to keep global trade moving. The online event was participated in big numbers by industry representatives, students, faculty members and alumni of GMU

◆ Capt. Suneha Gadpande

Capt. Suneha Gadpande, is an accomplished maritime professional with over fifteen years of experience in marine operations and international shipping. She currently serves as HSEQ and Marine Superintendent at Hafnia and is widely recognized for breaking barriers in the maritime industry through her leadership journey from navigating officer to ship captain and shore-based maritime executive.

She shared her experiences and insights about the role and contributions of seafarers. While describing her journey, the accolades and achievements she earned, she inspired all young men and women to take up this profession with enthusiasm and ambition.

◆ Captain Gaurav Akolkar

Capt. Gaurav Akolkar is a seasoned Master Mariner associated with Dynagas with more than fifteen years of sailing experience on crude oil, product, and Arctic LNG carriers. His extensive seagoing expertise provides valuable practical insights into the realities, challenges, and responsibilities of life at sea.

Captain Akolkar shared about contemporary maritime practices and the challenges faced by seafarers in an ever-changing global shipping landscape. His description of arctic shipping and very unique aspect of shipping were very interesting and generated a lot of curiosity and interest among participants.

◆ Shri Chirag Bahri

Mr. Chirag Bahri serves as the International Operations Manager at the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network and possesses extensive experience in advancing seafarers' welfare initiatives worldwide. He began his shipping career in India in 2004 after graduating as a Marine Engineer and has worked on various merchant vessels in different capacities, currently holding a Chief Engineer's License. Chirag was held hostage by Somali pirates on a hijacked vessel in 2010 and has devoted his life to helping seafarers and their families affected by piracy and many other challenges. His passion to serve seafarers has gained widespread recognition, and he has received prestigious national and international awards.

Mr. Bahri shared his expert perspectives on maritime security, piracy, and the strategic dimensions of safeguarding global shipping and seafarer welfare. He described unique initiatives of ISWAN and joint initiatives of ISWAN and GMU for the seafarers welfare and growth.

The entire webinar was hosted and moderated by Dr. Dharmesh Raval including introductions and interactions, while the vote of thanks was casted by Mr. Sarvanan Ravi. The behind the screen preparations and arrangements were executed by Mr. Rahul Akolkar.

This successful initiative was led by:

- **Dr. Dharmesh Raval**, Head, Centre for Maritime Economy
- **Mr. Saravanan Ravi**, Head, Centre for Maritime Labour Law

The event was efficiently coordinated by:

- **Mr. Rahul Akolkar**
- **Ms. Nandini Parashar**

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#MaritimeEconomy #MaritimeLabourLaw #MaritimeSafety #Seafarers #Shipping
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